

Ethical Corporeality and Synechism: A dialogue between Enrique Dussel and C.S. Peirce

by Lara Trout

English Abstract

In this paper, I argue that C. S. Peirce's doctrine of synechism helps Enrique Dussel address a specific audience-related problem that he identifies early in *Ethics of Liberation*. Dussel notes the difficulty that Western European-trained philosophers will have accepting as a universal material principle of his liberatory ethics, the "obligation to produce, reproduce, and develop the concrete human life of each ethical subject in community." This audience difficulty stems from the deeply rooted Cartesian and Kantian dualist approaches of "Western"/Global North ethics. Dussel uses neuroscience to support a holistic approach to ethics, where "ethical corporeality" involves a body-minded attunement to the concrete life/survival of the human person. I argue that Peirce's doctrine of synechism – which places importance on continuity – complements Dussel's use of neuroscience, giving philosophical grounding to his efforts to introduce human life and ethical corporeality as fundamental to his liberatory ethics.

Resumen en español

En este ensayo argumento que la doctrina del sinequismo de C.S. Peirce ayuda a Enrique Dussel a ocuparse de un problema específico relacionado con la audiencia de su *Ética de la Liberación*. Al comienzo de esa obra, Dussel señala la dificultad que tienen los filósofos entrenados en la tradición filosófica de Europa occidental de aceptar como un principio universal material de su ética liberadora, "la obligación de producir, reproducir y desarrollar la vida humana concreta de cada sujeto ético en comunidad." Esta dificultad de la audiencia proviene de los estilos dualistas profundamente arraigados en la ética occidental del Norte Global. Dussel utiliza la neurociencia para apoyar su planteamiento holístico de la ética, donde "la corporalidad ética" involucra una sintonía corporal-mental con la vida-supervivencia concreta de la persona humana. Arguyo que la doctrina del sinequismo de Peirce – que da importancia a la continuidad – complementa el uso que Dussel hace de la neurociencia, dando un fundamento filosófico a sus esfuerzos de introducir la vida humana y la corporalidad ética como fundamentales a su ética liberadora.

Resumo em português

Neste ensaio argumento que a doutrina do sinequismo de C.S. Peirce ajuda Enrique Dussel a resolver um problema específico com relação à audiência da sua *Ética de la Liberación*. No início dessa obra, Dussel aponta a dificuldade que os filósofos treinados na tradição de Europa ocidental tem para aceitar como um princípio universal material de sua ética libertadora, "a obrigação de produzir, reproduzir e desenvolver a vida humana concreta de cada sujeito ético em comunidade." Essa dificuldade da audiência provém dos estilos dualistas profundamente enraizados na ética ocidental do Norte

Global. Dussel utiliza a neurociência para sustentar a sua proposta holística da ética, onde “a corporalidade ética” envolve uma sintonia corporal-mental com a vida-supervivência concreta da pessoa humana. Eu argumento que a doutrina do sinequismo de Peirce — que dá importância à continuidade — complementa o uso que Dussel faz da neurociência. Isto dá um fundamento filosófico aos seus esforços para introduzir a vida humana e a corporalidade ética como fundamentais à sua ética libertadora.

Introduction

In his *Ethics of Liberation*, Enrique Dussel highlights his interest in dialogue with classical U.S. American Pragmatism.[1] He notes, “I think that a dialogue in the near future between pragmatism and the philosophy of liberation would be extremely fertile,” highlighting C.S. Peirce as the “most original” of the Pragmatists.[2] This request for dialogue may be surprising to some, given that *Ethics of Liberation* is a work explicitly committed to social justice aims, and Peirce was a man who explicitly expressed sexist, racist, ethnocentric, and colonialist views.[3] Clearly, however, worthy ideas can be expressed by people and societies that fail to live up to them. Such a pattern is reflected in my home country, the United States of America, whose espousal of freedom and inalienable rights as founding values has been in tension – both past and present – with colonialist, ethnocentric, racist, sexist and other problematic practices. In fact, Dussel prefers dialogue grounded in this kind of honest attention to power dynamics that exist alongside and within philosophical systems. His insistence on attention to such power dynamics is reflected in his preference of the term “Global North” as a more accurate geopolitical descriptor for countries often described as “Western” (a term that ignores the continents and peoples of the Global South). Dussel seeks from philosophers of the Global North a *North-South dialogue* based in an “ethical framework of symmetry, respect, and openness to the truth.” (2013, 14) In fact, the problematic that I take up in what follows involves Dussel’s noting the difficulty that Western European-trained philosophers of the Global North may have in accepting a non-dualistic approach to doing ethics.

In this paper, my overall goal is to make a contribution to the dialogue that Dussel requests with Pragmatism, focusing on C.S. Peirce.[4] I argue that Peirce’s doctrine of synechism helps Dussel address a specific problem that he identifies early in Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*. This problem relates to audience. Dussel notes the difficulty that Western European-trained philosophers will have accepting as a universal material principle of his liberatory ethics, the “obligation to produce, reproduce, and develop the concrete human life of each ethical subject in community.” (*EL* 55 [57]) Dussel explains that this audience difficulty stems from the deeply rooted Cartesian and Kantian dualist approaches of “Western”/Global North ethics, approaches that make it difficult to accept the ethical legitimacy of viewing the human as a holistic organism. Dussel uses

neuroscience to support this holistic approach, where ethical corporeality involves a body-minded attunement to the concrete *life*/survival of the human person.

I argue that Peirce's doctrine of synechism – which places importance on *continuity* – complements Dussel's use of neuroscience, giving philosophical grounding to his efforts to introduce human life and ethical corporeality as fundamental to his liberatory ethics. A philosophical emphasis on continuity provides Dussel with conceptual support to help his Western European-trained philosophy audience to (1) interrupt the tendency, however unintentional, to insist that ethical systems must accord with Cartesian and Kantian dualisms (such as mind vs. body, reason vs. emotion, conscious vs. nonconscious intention), and (2) allow a holistic view of the human being, in which mind-body, reason-emotion, conscious-nonconscious intention shade into one another, allowing an expansion of the ethical register beyond the limitations of the canon of the “West”/ Global North.

In what follows, I begin by situating Dussel's discussion of Pragmatism and the compatibilities he finds with it, including a shared audience issue in relation to dominant “Western”/Global North philosophy. Regarding Peirce in particular, I show how Dussel's admiration for Peirce's “declaration of war against Descartes” is importantly related to synechism, an aspect of Peirce's thought not explicitly engaged by Dussel. (EL 161, [165]) I then explain Dussel's efforts early in Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation* to establish a concrete *life*-centered universal material principle of his liberatory ethics. (EL 55 [57]) I call attention to the difficulty that Dussel predicts his Western European-trained philosophy audience – steeped in Cartesian/Kantian dualisms – will have with this aspect of his liberatory ethics. I then offer Peirce's synechism as philosophical support to supplement the neuroscientific arguments that Dussel uses both to ground ethical corporeality and to interrupt Cartesian/Kantian ethical dualisms.

Dussel's call for dialogue with Pragmatism

To situate Dussel's interest in Pragmatism and Peirce, let me briefly touch on several points he makes in Chapter Three, section 3.1 [paragraphs 163-170], “The Pragmatism of Charles S. Peirce.” (*El Pragmatismo: Charles Peirce*) In this section, he notes that his is a “*rereading* [*relectura*] of pragmatism for the ends of an ethics of liberation,” (EL 162 [166], my emphasis) focusing primarily on Peirce, who Dussel considers “without a doubt the most original pragmatist.” (EL 161 [165])

Despite Dussel's insistence on honesty about the United States' ugly historical and political truths, past and present, (EL 160-1 [163]) he notes the compatibilities between his work and Pragmatism, a philosophy United Statesian in its roots: “The ethics of liberation is informed by motivations similar to those of pragmatism. Frequently, when I lecture on the Latin American philosophy of liberation, North American colleagues will tell me that my theses are very similar to those of pragmatism.” (EL 161

[164]) One of these motivations is the challenging of Cartesian dualism, which features prominently in my project here.

Dussel also highlights – by means of a footnote – a parallel he sees between his work and Pragmatism, in terms of relationship to traditional Western European-trained philosophical audiences. Due to Pragmatism’s resistance to the dichotomization of human experience, as well as its insistence that theory be informed by practice, it is often sidelined in discussions of traditional “Western”/Global North philosophy. Dussel observes an analogous power dynamic in his own relationship, as a Latin American philosopher, to a Western European-trained/Global North audience. To highlight this comparison, Dussel introduces a lengthy quote from Pragmatist William James, giving his own square-bracketed connections:

As a Latin American philosopher I have the consistent feeling, as I give talks or teach courses in the United States or Europe, that I am “experiencing” something very much akin to what James describes in the following passage: “It is with no small amount of trepidation that I take my place behind this desk, and face this learned audience. To us Americans [substitute Latin Americans, today], the experience of receiving instruction from the living voice, as well as from the books, of European [read: and U.S.] scholars, is very familiar.... It seems the natural thing for us to listen whilst the Europeans [and philosophers from the United States] talk. The contrary habit, of talking whilst the Europeans [and those from the United States] listen, we have not yet acquired, and in him who first makes the adventure it begets a certain sense of apology being due for so presumptuous an act.” (EL 534n4,[5] citing James 1982, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 2.)

Here Dussel highlights his experience being in the role of instructing an audience whose traditional “Western”/Global North philosophical training usually places them in positions of unquestioned canonical authority.

I would argue that a relevantly similar phenomenon occurs in Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*, where Dussel seeks to establish the centrality of concrete human life to the universal material principle of his liberatory ethics. As I discuss more fully below, he notes that his work in establishing human life in this way “is certainly the most difficult part of my discussion and the one that will raise the most suspicions.” (EL 55 [57]) The audience he has in mind here is Western European-trained, Global North philosophers.

Synechism and Dussel’s praise of Peirce’s “declaration of war against Descartes”

While I argue that Peirce’s synechism is a tool to address this audience issue, Dussel himself does not address synechism in his treatment of Peirce. Instead Dussel begins (in paragraphs 165 and 166) by showcasing Peirce’s categories (firstness, secondness, and thirdness), relating them to Peirce’s work his 1860s essay series – the “Cognition Series” – written for the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. These essays

undertake deep critiques of Cartesian philosophy that Dussel commends, noting that Peirce's "declaration of war against Descartes"[6] recovers "many moments left to the side by modern European philosophy." (*EL* 161 [165]) Dussel takes as his point of synthesis between the categories and the "Cognition Series," the Peircean insight that (as Dussel puts it) "the immediate is never given to us since it is always mediated." (*EL* 161 [165]) It is beyond the scope of this project to sketch the many fruitful trajectories for dialogue stemming from this Dusselian synthesis. Here, I will briefly focus on a dimension of Peirce's "war against Descartes" *not* explicitly taken up by Dussel: attention to child development in relation to human cognition.

Dussel does not explicitly engage Peirce's treatment of child development in his sweeping exploration of Peirce's thought, which continues with Dussel's interpretations of various epistemological aspects of Peirce's thought that Dussel finds relevant to his Ethics of Liberation.[7] Yet in Peirce's "war against Descartes" in the "Cognition Series", child development plays a key role,[8] a role that highlights the *continuities* present in human embodiment and human development from infancy to adulthood. These continuities impact both cognition and habit.

For Peirce, to focus on continuities in human experience is to invoke synechism. In the essay, "The Law of Mind," from his 1890s *Monist* "Cosmology Series," Peirce describes synechism as "[t]he tendency to regard continuity...as an idea of prime importance in philosophy..."[9] He notes he originally attempted to "develop this doctrine" in the same 1860s "Cognition Series" that Dussel appreciates. (*EP* 1:313) In this earlier series, Peirce does not use the term synechism, yet his critique of Cartesianism places human cognition into synechistic context.

This synechistic context is organically invoked as Peirce examines child development in relation to human cognition and in so doing, highlights the lifespan continuum between human infancy and human adulthood. At least three additional and deeply interrelated continuities emerge in this context: (1) between nonconscious and conscious cognition, (2) between the personal and the social, and (3) between body and mind. For example, Peirce defies the Cartesian presumption of an unmediated, "intuitive self-consciousness," arguing that "there is no known self-consciousness to be accounted for in extremely young children." (*W* 2:193-94, 200-01) Rather he describes an embodied, social developmental process beginning with "powers of thought" through which infants/toddlers master "the complicated trigonometry of vision, and the delicate adjustments of coordinated movement" and also, with time, language. (*W* 2:201) Before conscious thought, babies exhibit the nonconscious cognition necessary to bodily navigate their world. Peirce is highlighting the continuity between nonconscious and conscious cognition in human development. Implicitly he is also expressing continuity between the personal and the social, since the human baby is entirely dependent on caretakers for survival. (The human baby's dependence on caretakers for survival also resonates with Dussel's insistence on concrete human life as central to his universal material principle; it is unfortunately beyond the scope of this paper to fully explore this resonance.)

Peirce argues that young children *develop* self-consciousness through social interactions with caretakers, whose testimony is pivotal in teaching the young, vulnerable child about reality itself. (W 2:201-3) Peirce illustrates, “A child hears it said that the stove is hot. But it is not, he says; and, indeed, that central body is not touching it, and only what that touches is hot or cold. But he touches it, and finds the testimony confirmed in a striking way.” (W 2:202) For Peirce, testimony (as well as error) is pivotal in helping the child *infer* a unique “self.” (W 2:202-03) Here again, he is expressing the continuity between the personal and the social: social mediation is involved in the child’s coming to self-consciousness. That is to say, it is through *social* interaction that the child comes to a sense of themselves as having a “self” that is uniquely *personal*.

Regarding the continuity between body and mind, there are many aspects to highlight. First of all, the development of the infant’s cognition is premised on the bodily survival of the infant. Second, the infant’s beliefs about the world involve social and bodily interaction with the world, as the hot stove example illustrates. Finally, Peirce’s ascribing three aspects to cognition refuses a Cartesian mind-body dualism. Instead cognition, for Peirce, involves a “representative” dimension, a “pure denotative” dimension, and a felt dimension. (W 2:231-32) The latter two dimensions explicitly involve, for Peirce, the embodied nerve-firings that cognitive activity presupposes. (W 2:232) Peirce is explicitly aware that his account of cognition challenges the individualist tenor of Cartesian clear and distinct perception. In fact, Peirce’s epistemological ideal is premised on his conviction that, “to make single individuals absolute judges of truth is most pernicious.” (W 2:212) For Peirce knowledge is always the product of a community of inquiry, and his ideal community of inquiry is infinitely inclusive, fallible, and practices science to test its beliefs. (W 2:212, 239; W 3:253-55)[10]

A final note on Peirce’s “Cognition Series” – cognition involves *habits*, which are body-mind “nervous associations” that involve patterns within one’s lived experience that allow one to make *generalizations* about their experience. (W 2:232-33) These body-mind behavioral patterns enable survival, adaptation, and growth as the human organism engages specific external environments – to accommodate, for example, regularities in weather and/or food growth. Habit formation begins in childhood and continues into adulthood – with habits that are deeply mastered fading from conscious awareness and becoming synonymous with “instincts.”[11] While Dussel makes no mention of human habit in his treatment of Peirce’s thought, I would argue that habit is a richly synechistic aspect of human embodied engagement in the world that is compatible with Dussel’s challenges to Cartesian and Kantian dualisms.

In the later “Cosmology Series,” where Peirce explicitly highlights an embrace of synechism, as noted above, he explains the very structure of the cosmos as habit. Indeed the synechistic reach of habits includes (1) the body-mind behaviors of an individual human organism described just above, (2) the behavior patterns of a community or society (such as language), (3) the rhythms of the natural world beyond humans (such as seasonal weather patterns), and also (4) the rhythms of the universe

itself (such as the life cycle of a star). Peirce urged his scientific contemporaries away from necessitarian mechanistic models towards a model for understanding an organic cosmos that could account for spontaneity, and for understanding mind as on a continuum with matter.[12]

In relation to Dussel's work in *Ethics of Liberation*, especially his efforts early in Chapter One, Peirce's synechism provides philosophical support for moving beyond dualistic thinking and for focusing positively on *continuity* as a source of insight. If body and mind are seen on a continuum, for example, lines of philosophical inquiry can more easily open into how mind implies body, leading to exploration of how neurons make cognition possible. And philosophical inquiry into how body implies mind can lead to explorations of the intelligence involved in human bioregulation. These latter topics of neuroscience can then be more easily viewed as indispensable to philosophical discovery.

In what follows, three deeply interrelated continuities that I trace in relation to Dussel's work in *Ethics of Liberation* are – body and mind, nonconscious and conscious intention, and emotion and reason.

Dussel's ethics of life: context and audience

Let us turn to the initial pages of Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*. In the first sentence of this chapter, Dussel insists that his ethics of liberation is an "ethics of life." (*EL* [57] 55) In fact, each of his six chapters begins with a sentence reminding the reader of this explicit affirmation.[13] The life Dussel has in mind is concrete human[14] life, which is *vulnerable* to forces that could bring about its death and which thus has *needs*. (*EL* 94 [101], 434 [404, Thesis 3]) Indeed, in his Thesis 11, Dussel gives as a synonym for "ethics of life," "ethics of human *survival*": human beings die if their survival needs are not met. (*EL* 438 [404], my emphasis) Thus, he goes so far as to say that concrete human life/survival is "the universal material criterion of ethics par excellence." (*ibid.*) This human life involves three "moments" – "production, reproduction, and development of *the human life of each ethical subject*." (*ibid.* my emphasis)

Without naming synechism, Dussel invokes the sensibility of continuity when he clarifies that the three moments of human life – production, reproduction and development – range from basic survival in terms of bodily "vegetative or animalistic aspects", to the flourishing made possible by development of "mental functions" and "human culture." (Thesis 11, 438-9 [404])[15] Included within these three moments, for Dussel, are the various institutions and systems that shape and render possible more sophisticated levels of human development. Part of this sophistication involves "critical ethics" – "a transforming or critical liberating process" to be applied to systems – including ethical systems – that fail to protect human life in its three moments. (*EL* 438-9 [404, Thesis 11])

The protection of human life is not an abstract issue for Dussel. He is unequivocally clear about the cultural-historical-political *concrete* context in which he places his project: “the terror of a harrowing misery that destroys a significant portion of humanity at the end of the twentieth [and twenty-first] century, together with the unsustainable environmental destruction of the Earth.” (EL xx)[16] And he is explicit in his challenge to the typical parochialisms and universalizations of the “Western” philosophy of the Global North: “...I seek to situate myself in a global, planetary horizon, beyond the Latin American region, beyond the Helleno- and Eurocentrism of contemporary Europe and the United States, in a broader sweep ranging from the ‘periphery’ to the ‘center’ and toward ‘globality.’” (EL xix)[17] This means that Dussel refuses the business-as-usual, for many philosophers of the Global North, of doing ethical theory without paying sufficient attention to the humans who have not been considered fully human[18] – i.e. those humans who have been seen as expendable, exploitable, or otherwise unworthy of full ethical consideration.

Dussel’s critical ethical efforts resonate with an important question Charles Mills asks in his book *The Racial Contract* (1997). In this work, Mills – like Dussel – criticizes historical “Western” ethical and political philosophers who could have *but did not* call attention to the spectacular ethical problems occurring as the Western European colonial project was unfolding, even as these thinkers lived co-temporaneously with this project. Mills asks after ethical works that *were not* written during this dark epoch of genocide, enslavement, land and resource theft, treaty violation, etc.: “Where is Grotius’s magisterial *On Natural Law and the Wrongness of the Conquest of the Indies*, Locke’s stirring *Letter concerning the Treatment of the Indians*, Kant’s moving *On the Personhood of Negroes*, Mill’s famous condemnatory *Implications of Utilitarianism for English Colonialism*, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels’s outraged *Political Economy of Slavery?*” (Mills 1997, 94; cf. 1998, 1-19) Mills’ critical questioning is compatible with Dussel’s critical ethics. Both explicitly repudiate performative contradictions of theory that espouses personhood and freedom for “all”, while turning a blind eye towards (or even participating in) practices promoting the *death* of human ethical subjects.

Dussel uses the first paragraph of Chapter One, “The Material Moment of Ethics,” to clarify the chapter’s focus on “human life [as] the content of ethics” and on a “universal principle of all ethics, especially of critical ethics”, which is “the obligation to produce, reproduce, and develop the concrete human life of each ethical subject in community.” (EL 55 [57]) He also notes that this initial chapter “is certainly the most difficult part of my discussion and the one that will raise the most suspicions.” (EL 55 [57]) The difficulty here is relative to audience. The audience for whom Dussel is arguing is Western European-trained, Global North philosophers, who are deeply steeped in Cartesian and Kantian dualistic sensibilities. Dussel’s liberatory ethics presents a radical challenge to centuries of ethical philosophy in the “West”/Global North, his goal being to “justify the struggle of the victims, of the oppressed.” (EL 56 [57]) (Those struggling against the death-promoting policies and systems of the twenty-first century are arguably *not* the audience Dussel needs to convince in this context.)

As an example of the difficulty Dussel predicts his audience members will have accepting his presentation of a life-centric universal material principle, a critique from James L. Marsh is telling. Marsh reviews *Ethics of Liberation* in an essay entitled, “The Material Principle and the Formal Principle in Dussel’s Ethics” (2000). Marsh, who has published multiple books[19] on philosophy of liberation, is deeply sympathetic to Dussel’s liberatory project. In a comment that is especially relevant in the present context, Marsh notes, “I personally find what [Dussel] has done to be enormously impressive. In one sense, he has put the ethical-political Humpty Dumpty back together again. Opposites such as right and good, deontology and teleology, justification and application, duty and happiness, universal and particular, which have fallen apart in contemporary thought, he has integrated.” (Marsh 2000, 60) Marsh’s description of the healing of Humpty Dumpty shows clear appreciation for Dussel’s refusal of typical “Western” philosophical dichotomization of aspects of ethical inquiry that, in fact, inform each other: right and good, deontology and teleology, and so on.

Marsh is not as appreciative of Dussel’s work early in Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*, where Dussel resists “Western” philosophical dualisms relative to human embodiment (e.g., body vs. mind, conscious vs. nonconscious intention, reason vs. emotion). Marsh is unconvinced, “How do we get from ‘John is eating’ to ‘John should continue eating’? *I confess that I am not convinced by his argument*, backed by a long discussion of human physiology, that spontaneous, bodily, prediscursive processes engage in spontaneous evaluations and already see some things as values and others as disvalues. The question here would be, Why should such bodily values be ethical, moral values in the full post-Kantian, communicative sense?” (Marsh 2000, 63, my emphasis) Given Marsh’s overall admiration for Dussel’s work, I find this quote especially telling, as it is not coming from a naysayer to liberatory philosophy out to consciously guard against any challenge to the “Western” canon.

I see at least three problems with Marsh’s critique. First of all, I would argue that Marsh is appealing to a “Western”/Global North canonical foundation – his own and his audience’s – when he asks, “How do we get from ‘John is eating’ to ‘John should continue eating’? *I confess that I am not convinced by his argument....*” (ibid., my emphasis) The “we” to whom Marsh appeals could hardly include people living in famine-stricken parts of the world, where food is more obviously associated with life and death. Marsh seems to appeal to a “we” so confident in having food readily available, that malnutrition[20] and starvation do not loom as threats within lived experience. Secondly, Marsh’s use of the phrase “a long discussion of human *physiology*” (my emphasis) both oversimplifies Dussel’s detailed and rigorous treatment of *neuroscience* and fails to adequately engage the continuities (between body and mind, nonconscious and conscious intention, and emotion and reason) for which Dussel gives strong argumentation. And, finally, Marsh appeals to a straw person when he comments, “The question here would be, Why should such bodily values be ethical, moral values in the full post-Kantian, communicative sense?” (ibid.) Dussel is careful to portray ethical corporeality as involving a *spectrum* in which nonconscious life-valuation remains *embedded* within the most sophisticated forms of human ethical reasoning. Marsh

refuses this neuroscientific rigor and subtlety. I would argue that Marsh is exhibiting the very audience problem that Dussel predicts in Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*. Marsh has trouble fully resisting Cartesian/Kantian dualist thinking, which is arguably so entrenched in the “Western” ethical tradition, that it can surface even among a friend of Dussel’s liberatory ethics, as Marsh himself clearly is.

Ethical corporeality: adding synechism to neuroscientific support

When I spoke with Professor Dussel at a conference in April 2017, he told me that before he published *Ética de la Liberación (Ethics of Liberation)* in 1998, he had attended a presentation by neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, who discussed his groundbreaking work in *Descartes’ Error*, which was first published in 1994. Dussel was so impressed by Damasio’s work that it served as an inspiration for Dussel’s work in *Ethics of Liberation*. Given his direct influence by Damasio’s work, it is not surprising to me that neuroscience[21] would play a pivotal role early in Chapter One, where Dussel is making his case for the centrality to his liberatory ethics of ethical corporeality, a concept that defies Cartesian and Kantian dualisms, while upholding a holistic view of the human as a living organism.

In this section, I trace Dussel’s efforts, in the opening pages of Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*, to establish ethical corporeality as a legitimate corrective to the established ethical dualisms fueled by Descartes and Kant. As I do so, I will supplement Dussel’s neuroscientific support for ethical corporeality with Peircean synechism, in order to give conceptual philosophical support to this innovative ethical concept. My goal is to make Dussel’s account more convincing to his Western European-trained philosophical audience. Perhaps if Marsh had been guided by synechism in his reading of the neuroscientific support Dussel gives to ground a universal material principle of ethics in concrete human *life*, he could have more effectively held in place the continuities that Dussel was inviting him to consider.

Early in Chapter One, Dussel highlights aspects of Kantian ethical dualism that his ethics of liberation challenges. On the one hand, Kant views as ethically irrelevant the human body’s inclination to promote its own life. Dussel quotes Kant, “To preserve one’s life is a duty, and besides everyone has an immediate inclination to do so. But on this account the often anxious care that most people take of it still has no inner worth and their maxim has no moral content.” (*EL* 56 [57]) On the other hand, Kant sees the “soul” as the sole site of ethical reasoning. (*EL* 57 [58]) Dussel stresses the importance of resisting and moving beyond this dualism: “[W]e will have to pass beyond the reductionistic dualism (of Descartes, Kant, or the ‘Enlightenment’) that situated in a hypothetical ‘soul’ what ethics is needed in order to present its theme and that, because of its dualistic ‘metaphysical anthropology,’ deformed from the outset all possible posterior analysis.” (*EL* 57 [58], cf. 66-7 [70]) Once again, the “we” Dussel invokes here is a “we” shaped by the philosophical tradition of the Global North, which privileges the human mind/soul over the human body. In addition, when Dussel stresses that the

“reductionistic dualism” of Descartes, Kant and others “deformed from the outset all possible posterior analysis” (EL 57 [58]) – part of the deformation involves doing ethics *without* granting that concrete human life must be a necessary part of the foundation of any ethics. It is necessary to challenge dualistic assumptions that continue to allow ethical systems to exist alongside large-scale human misery and death, without explicit critical tools to sufficiently address the concrete reality of massive numbers of people dying unjustly.

For Dussel, “ethical corporeality” refers to the myriad ways the human brain facilitates the life/survival of the human organism, the core insight being that “the brain is the organ directly responsible for the human subject’s ‘continuing to live,’ via reproduction and the development of the human life of the organism, of the communitarian and historical corporeality of the ethical subject.” (EL 59 [60]) His introduction of ethical corporeality occurs in section 1.1 of Chapter One, the original Spanish title for which is, “*El Sistema Cognitivo y Afectivo-Evaluativo Cerebral Humano*” (Dussel 1998, 93 [59]), my own translation for which is, “The Human Cognitive and Affective-Evaluative Cerebral System.”[22]

Dussel begins this section by asserting the need for a *holistic* ethical view of the human organism: “Ethics should give importance to those self-organized or self-regulated processes of life, since the modern, exaggerated, and unilateral importance of ‘consciencism’ [*conciencialismo*] results in the loss of the organic corporeality of ethical existence.” (EL 57, [59]) Let me offer a synechistic interpretation of this passage’s reclaiming of “the organic corporeality of ethical existence.” (ibid.) There are at least three interrelated continuities that Dussel is introducing here – all of which involve promoting the life/survival of the human organism. In other words, they are part of what he calls the “‘evaluative-affective’ system.”[23] (EL 60-1, [61-2]) First, body/mind is a fundamental continuity. Dussel links *mind* to the brain: “The ‘mental functions’ of the brain are...conceptual categorization, existence of linguistic-cultural processes, and self-consciousness... . The question is not about ‘mind-body’ but the existence of a ‘corporeality’ in whose complex organicity the brain is given as an internal moment that has ‘mental functions.’” (EL 484n60)[24] Not only does mind imply body (because mind requires a brain), but my “conceptual categorization” and my “linguistic-cultural processes” also imply a concrete, *embodied*, and *affective* engagement with my external contexts. In this engagement, object categorization involves an automatic affective *evaluation* of these same objects in terms of their survival value for me personally. I also encounter, bodily, other humans who teach me language and culture, and an awareness of myself. (EL 61-2 [62-3], 63-4 [66]) While it is beyond the scope of this project to fully explore them, there are important resonances here to Peirce’s work in the “Cognition Series” discussed above.

In addition to the continuity between body and mind, Dussel argues for the ethical dimensions of “organic corporeality” using two additional continuities: nonconscious and conscious intention, and emotion and reason. I see these all three of these continua as deeply *interrelated* components of Dussel’s ethical inquiry and his

evaluative-affective system. My intent is not to isolate them as separable axes, but to lend conceptual support to Dussel's multifaceted effort to bridge and transform Cartesian/Kantian ethical dualisms.

Integrated with the continuity of body and mind is the continuity between nonconscious and conscious intention. On the latter front, Dussel seeks to interrupt "consciencism", or Cartesian/Kantian exclusivist assumptions about the capacity of human consciousness and/or conscience to capture or control all relevant aspects of ethics. He explicitly incorporates into his liberatory ethics the terrain of "nonintentional" aspects of corporeal human existence (*EL* 57 [59]): "[H]aving fixed our attention on 'consciencism' [*la "consciencia"*], we have lost the entire level of the self-organizing process of life [*los procesos auto-organizativos de la vida*], including even the processes of self-regulated social life, which are not discovered by conscience [*la consciencia*] since it is a matter of structures that are partly nonintentional [*no-intencionales*]." (*EL* 57 [58]) Dussel seeks to *expand the ethical register* of the human organism to include the entire continuum of life/survival-oriented brain activity, without the dualistic "Western" gatekeeping criterion of conscious intention. By "ethical corporeality," as noted above, Dussel means that "the brain is the organ directly responsible for the human subject's 'continuing to live,' via reproduction and the development of the human life of the organism...." (*EL* 59 [60]) The processes by which the brain promotes life/survival of the concrete human organism are by no means all consciously controlled or consciously intended.

Damasio's work in neuroscience helps detail the sophisticated and often nonconscious work that the human brain coordinates in order to continuously promote the survival of the human organism. Dussel gives as a specific concrete example Damasio's description of the human brain's automatic bioregulatory efforts in terms of blood sugar levels. Damasio writes (and Dussel quotes), "Several hours after a meal your blood sugar level drops, and neurons in the hypothalamus detect the change; activation of the pertinent innate pattern makes the brain alter the body state so that the probability for correction can be increased; you feel hungry, and initiate actions to end your hunger; you eat, and the ingestion of food brings about a correction in blood sugar; finally, the hypothalamus again detects a change in blood sugar, this time an increase, and the appropriate neurons place the body in the state whose experience constitutes the feeling of satiety." (Damasio 1994, 116, quoted in *EL* 59 [60]) Note the brain's ongoing activities that promote life/survival *without* the conscious intention of the human organism: monitoring blood sugar levels, activation of the necessary mechanisms to induce hunger, etc. These brain activities happen behind the scenes, buttressing the eventual awareness of hunger and the conscious intentionality, when food is available, of actually eating.[25]

How does this example of nonconscious blood sugar regulation reflect *ethical* insight for Dussel? Through the promotion of the concrete *life* of the human organism. The promotion of life/survival is the ethical core of *Ethics of Liberation*. Thus, the brain's activities to promote the life/survival of the human organism register *ethically*. Here we

see Dussel suggesting the *continuity* between nonconscious and conscious intention. In the paradigm of ethical corporeality, human intention is ethically relevant when it promotes life, whether or not this intention is conscious and controlled.

In terms of the continuum between reason and emotion, ethical reasoning is also informed by affective or emotional attunement to survival needs – the evaluative-affective system. For Damasio, emotion involves bodily movement corresponding to the evaluation of an object or scenario by an organism, evaluation in terms of the survival of the unique human organism. (Damasio 2003, 35, 53; cf. Dussel, *EL* 64-5 [67-8])[26] Indeed, for both Damasio and Dussel, *value* arises from how an object registers in terms of the survival needs of the human organism. In his Thesis 12, Dussel notes, “I will use the term[] ‘value’ [“*valor*”] ...to refer to...that which is compatible with the criterion of truth, of survival, or the reproduction and development of the life of the human subject.” (*EL* 439 [404]) His ethical corporeality, drawing on Damasio’s work, involves “good” or “bad” valuations assigned based on a stimulus or scenario’s impact on the survival of the unique human organism. (*EL* 61-69 [62-73], 59ff [60ff], 69 [73])

Damasio makes survival-based valuation explicit in *Descartes’ Error* on the page following the hunger example quoted above: “Preorganized mechanisms are important not just for basic biological regulation. They also help the organism classify things or events as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ because of their possible impact on survival.” (Damasio 1994, 117) Thus, beyond the brain’s direction of bioregulatory measures within the human organism, the classification of objects/scenarios outside the individual human is also informed by this affective life/survival evaluation.[27]

Viewing as sources of ethical insight the continuities of body and mind, nonconscious and conscious intention, and emotion and reason – helps counter what Dussel calls “the loss of the organic corporeality of ethical existence” that occurs when “conscientism” blocks inquiry into how the embodiment of the human organism – and the evaluative-affective system – can be a continuous source of ethical insight. (*EL* 57 [59]) Recall Dussel’s critique, noted above, of the Cartesian/Kantian dualistic assumption that the human “soul” is the sole source of ethics on the earthly human plane. (*EL* 57 [58]) Regarding the other side of this dualism, there are the Cartesian/Kantian assumptions that, (1) at best, the human body is not a source of ethical insight. (*EL* 56 [58]) And (2) human emotion, at best, is ethically irrelevant. (*EL* 64 [67], 66-67 [70]) With the three continuities highlighted here, Dussel is interrupting these dualistic assumptions and urging a “unitary understanding of the human being” (*EL* 67 [71]) that allows for *ethical* corporeality premised on a neuroscientifically grounded conception of human *life* as an always-already ethical sensibility.

Returning to Marsh’s criticisms of Dussel detailed earlier, I would note that where Marsh saw a discussion of mere “physiology”, Dussel and Damasio (as well as Edelman and Maturana) detail the neuroscience that underpins how body and mind, emotion and reason, and nonconscious and conscious intention, inform ethical corporeality. Marsh also poses the oversimplified question, “Why should such bodily values be ethical,

moral values in the full post-Kantian, communicative sense?” (2000, 63) A synechistic response to this question resists its all-or-nothing framing. Synechism, instead, invites inquiry into how ethical attunement to human life involves a *continuity* that does not merely collapse conscious ethical reasoning and basic human life attunement – but rather involves the former’s vital rootedness in the latter.

Human life as Dussel’s fundamental ethical continuity

In this final section, we can trace the synechistic thread of *life as value* from the most instinctual nonconscious affective evaluation, to the farthest reaches of conscious and controlled ethical reasoning. Dussel notes, “[T]he exercise of the affective-evaluative system...is an originary constitutive moment of the very act of theoretical-practical and empirical capturing...of categorization” (EL 61-2 [63]) – and this categorization implies and requires *value* grounded in “the criterion of the reproduction and development of the life of the human organic subject (in order to be simultaneously subsumed in linguistic-cultural criteria).” (EL 62 [63]) Note the continuity of *life value* here. The “affective-evaluative system” *judges* according to “the criterion of the reproduction and development of the *life* of the human organic subject.” (ibid., my emphasis) And while this affectivity-driven evaluation is shared in other-than-human organisms, in humans it is “simultaneously subsumed in linguistic-cultural criteria.” (ibid.) That is to say, for Dussel, the basic affective evaluation of objects for their survival value is continuous with more sophisticated levels of ethical reasoning that involve “linguistic-cultural criteria.” (ibid.)

While he makes no mention of Peirce’s synechism, Damasio provides a helpful synechistic metaphor of this vital thread of life in his 2003 book, *Looking for Spinoza*. He explains that the more basic human biological regulatory – or affective[28] – mechanisms are analogous to the trunk of a great tree, whose upper limbs and branches represent the more refined responses to stimuli that would signal, for Damasio, human *mind*. [29] Key to this metaphor is that the “progressively higher and more elaborate branches coming off the main trunks...maintain[] a two-way communication with their roots.” (Damasio 2003, 38, 27-40) That is to say, as sophisticated as human reasoning becomes due to the concomitant sophistication of the human brain, the basic “trunk” of survival-monitoring by areas of the human brain shared by animals with less sophisticated brains *plays an indispensable role* in promoting the life/survival of the human organism.

Dussel puts it this way as he concludes section 1.1 of Chapter One of *Ethics of Liberation*: “The reality of the human life of the ethical-cerebral subject has, in its neural evaluative-affective system, a permanent vigilance of requirements, obligations, an ‘ought-to-be’ that internally incorporates motives, and that integrates itself constitutively in all the activities of the practical and theoretical levels of all possible behavior.” (EL 69 [73]) In other words, ethical corporeality’s “permanent vigilance” is the vital thread of life-attunement that integrates body and mind, nonconscious and conscious intention, and

emotion and reason. Dussel also highlights that this permanent vigilance could not be achieved by “self-responsible ethical consciousness” *alone* (ibid.). Rather the latter can provide creative intervention “in critical moments” where adaptability requires the human to go beyond established repertoires of survival maintenance. (ibid.)

To conclude this section, I offer the final lines of paragraph 70 in section 1.1 of Chapter One. These lines are a helpful final synthesis of Dussel’s efforts both to shift beyond Cartesian/Kantian dualisms, as well as to present ethical corporeality as a neuroscientifically grounded approach. Dussel says, “Dualism and Kantian formalism (as well as Cartesianism...) have dealt a bad hand to ethics. The negation of the ‘body’ in favor of the decorporealized ‘soul’ (from the Greeks up to modern ethics) speaks to us of a very specific tradition....” (EL 66 [70]) Dussel is refusing the universalizing assumptions of ethics as traditionally practiced in the Global North, noting that doing ethics in this “Western” style reflects not universal practice, but rather a “very specific tradition.” (EL 66 [70])

The remainder of this passage is a description of “*la otra*”, “the other” tradition. And this other tradition is described *in parentheses* to fully offset it from the dualist one Dussel has just described. Unfortunately, these parentheses and “*la otra*”/“the other” are omitted in the English translation, creating confusion that undermines Dussel’s insights. Here are the remaining lines of paragraph 70, with square brackets indicating my corrections based on the original Spanish. Again, Dussel is describing an alternative tradition:

[(the other,] following [the] mythical path of the resurrection of the flesh with the Egyptian Osiris, or [with] the Semitic or Muslim tradition, ... culminates in the neurobiological sciences that allow us to recover the unity of the corporeal...[)].
(EL 66-7 [70])

(la otra, siguiendo la vía mítica de la resurrección de la carne con el Osiris egipcio, o con la tradición semita o musulmana, desemboca en las ciencias neuro-cerebrales que nos permiten recuperar la unidad de la corporalidad...).
(EL, Dussel 1998, 102-103, [70])

Dussel thus offers another path for ethical thinking – a synechistic path that, confirmed by neuroscience, “allows us to recover the *unity* of the corporeal.” (EL 66-7 [70], my emphasis) It is in the unity of the corporeal that *human life* becomes the central core of Dussel’s liberatory ethics.

Conclusion

This project has barely scratched the surface of the many points of dialogue possible between Enrique Dussel and C. S. Peirce. I will close by gesturing towards two of the many ways in which, as Dussel once told me himself, we must not only engage Peirce’s ideas, but also move beyond them. First of all, as helpful and innovative as his doctrine of synechism is, it is worth remembering that Peirce’s own ethnocentrism, colonialism,

racism, and sexism left him ill-equipped to live consistently with his own philosophy.[30] Dussel roundly criticizes Pragmatism's founders in general in this vein. (*EL* 160-1 [163], 166 [170])

Secondly Dussel's liberatory ethics itself can be seen as one way to go beyond Peirce. Peirce's epistemological/scientific ideal of an infinitely inclusive community of inquiry into reality and knowledge *implies* a robust ethics to support this very inclusion. Dussel makes note of this: "[T]he ethics of liberation has always affirmed, as did Peirce, that logic...presupposes ethics." (*EL* 162 [166]) Yet Peirce's philosophy does not include a robust ethics. Dussel's work in *Ethics of Liberation* can surely be seen as one way in which such a radically inclusive ethics can be built.[31]

Lara Trout
University of Portland
5000 N. Willamette Blvd
Portland, OR 97203
trout@up.edu

Works Cited

Boero, Hedy. 2014. *Charles S. Peirce: Claves para una ética pragmaticista*. Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra.

Brent, Joseph. 1998. *Charles Sanders Peirce: A Life*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Campos, Daniel G. Rev. of *Peirce y el mundo hispánico*, by Jaime Nubiola and Fernando Zalamea. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 43.4 (2007): 795–801.

_____. 2014. "Peirce's Prejudices against Hispanics and the Ethical Scope of His Philosophy." *The Pluralist*. 9 (2): 42-64.

_____. 2015. "The Role of Diagrammatic Reasoning in Ethical Deliberation." *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*. 51 (3): 338-57.

Colapietro, Vincent. 1989. *Peirce's Approach to the Self: A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Damasio, Antonio. 1994. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. New York: Avon Books.

_____. 1999. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt.

_____. 2003. *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*. Orlando, Fla. Harcourt.

_____. 2010. *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain*. New York: Random House.

Dussel, Enrique. 1998. *Ética de la Liberación en la Edad de la Globalización y de la Exclusión*. Madrid: Editorial Trotta.

_____. 2013a. *Ethics of Liberation In the Age of Globalization and Exclusion*. Translated by Eduardo Mendieta, et al. Translation edited by Alejandro Vallega. London: Duke University Press.

_____. 2013b. "Agenda for a South-South Philosophical Dialogue." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*. 11 (1): 3-18.

_____. 2014. "Anti-Cartesian Meditations: On the Origin of the Philosophical Anti-Discourse of Modernity." *Journal for Culture and Religious Theory*. 13(1): 11-52.

Edelman, Gerard. 1988. *Topobiology: An Introduction to Molecular Embryology*. New York: Basic Books.

_____. 1989. *The Remembered Present: A Biological Theory of Consciousness*. New York: Basic Books.

_____. 1992. *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind*. New York: Basic Books.

Herdy, Rachel. 2014. "The Origin and Growth of Peirce's Ethics: A Categorical Analysis." *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* 6 (2): 264-286.

James, William. 1982. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Penguin.

Marsh, James. 1988. *Post-Cartesian Meditations*. New York: Fordham University Press.

_____. 1994. *Critique, Action, and Liberation*. Albany: SUNY Press.

_____. 1999. *Process, Praxis, and Transcendence*. Albany: SUNY Press.

_____. 2000. "The Material Principle and the Formal Principle in Dussel's Ethics." In *Thinking from the Underside of History*. Edited by Linda Martín Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield: 51-67.

Maturana, Humberto. 1985. *El árbol del conocimiento: Las bases biológicas del entendimiento humano*. Santiago: Editorial Universitaria.

Mills, Charles W. 1997. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

_____. 1998. "Non-Cartesian Sums: Philosophy and the African-American Experience." In *Blackness Visible*, 1-19. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Pappas, Gregory F., ed. 2011. *Pragmatism in the Americas*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Peirce, Charles S. 1965. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce: Volume I and II*. ed. C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, Harvard University Press.

_____. 1982-86. *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition*, ed. M. Fisch, C. J. W. Kloesel, E. Moore, et al. Vols. 2-3. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

_____. 1992a. *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Vol. 1, 1867-1893. ed. N. Houser and C. J. W. Kloesel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

_____. 1992b. *Reasoning and the Logic of Things*, ed. Kenneth Laine Ketner. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

_____. 1998. *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Vol. 2, 1893-1913. ed. Peirce Edition Project. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Trout, Lara. 2010. *The Politics of Survival: Peirce, Affectivity, and Social Criticism*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Notes

[1] My thanks to Alejandro Santana for his critical feedback and dialogue on earlier drafts of this project, and to Daniel Campos for fielding my questions about subtle translation nuances between English and Spanish, for his critical feedback on my penultimate draft, and for translating my abstract for this article into Portuguese. My theology colleague Rene Sanchez introduced me to Enrique Dussel's thought in the first place. My thanks to him and also my International Languages colleague Maria Echenique; we held multiple interdisciplinary discussions of *Ethics of Liberation* that

have deepened my understanding of Dussel's project in this work. I also thank Maria for editing my Spanish translation of this article's abstract.

[2] *Ethics of Liberation* (Dussel 2013, 166, 161). A note of clarification: hereafter, my citations from Dussel's *Ethics of Liberation* (2013) include the abbreviation *EL* followed by the page number, then, in square brackets, Dussel's paragraph number. For example, the quote just given from page 166 in the English translation is in paragraph 170; the quote just given from page 161 is in paragraph 165. Thus the citation would be (*EL* 166 [170], 161 [165]). I include the paragraph numbers for ease in tracking between the English translation and the original Spanish, *Ética de la Liberación* (1998), or other translations.

[3] Brent 1998, 61-62, 319; Campos 2007, 2014; Trout 2010, 2-3.

[4] I also see my project as a contribution to the conversation that Gregory Pappas encourages in his 2011 edited collection, *Pragmatism in the Americas*.

[5] For the location of this footnote in original Spanish edition, see *EL*, Dussel 1998, 280-81n5.

[6] cf. "Anti-Cartesian Meditations: On the Origin of the Philosophical Anti-Discourse of Modernity" (Dussel 2014). My thanks to an anonymous reviewer who reminded me to reference this piece.

[7] Paragraphs 165-70. Dussel's brief but sweeping catalogue of aspects of Peirce's thought provides many points of entry for Peirce scholars interested in continuing the dialogue with Dussel, both scholars – like myself – who do not study Peirce alongside Karl-Otto Apel and those who do. There are points where Dussel's interpretations of Peirce can be challenged and improved, as well as closer attention paid to translation issues that create problematic conceptual slippages.

[8] See Peirce's essay, "Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man," *Writings of Charles S. Peirce*, volume 2, pages 200-04. [Hereafter, citations from the *Writings of Charles S. Peirce* are referred to as "W," followed by the volume and page number (Peirce 1982-86).] Vincent Colapietro gives an excellent analysis of Peirce's treatment of child development in this essay, in his *Peirce's Approach to the Self* (1989, 69-75). I draw on Colapietro in my own work on Peirce, child development, and affectivity, in a chapter entitled, "The Affectivity of Cognition," (Trout 2010, 69-127).

[9] *The Essential Peirce*, volume 1, page 313. [Hereafter citations from *The Essential Peirce*, volumes 1 and 2, are referred to as "EP," followed by the volume number, then page number (Peirce 1992a, 1998)]. In "The Law of Mind," Peirce gives a technical discussion of what he calls "Continuity of Ideas" (EP 1:314-15) and also a mathematically focused discussion, "Infinity and Continuity, in General" (EP 1:316-22). See also, Peirce's 1898 Cambridge Conference Lecture, "The Logic of Continuity" in *Reasoning and the Logic of Things* (Peirce 1992b, 242-68).

[10] While it is beyond the scope of this paper to address, Peirce's ideal community of inquiry also practices agape. This is a point of fruitful critical dialogue with Dussel, who mistakenly attributes *éros* to Peirce's scientific community in this ideal context (*EL* 162 [166]; cf. Peirce's "Evolutionary Love", EP 2:352-71; cf. Trout 2010, 195-228, 269-72)

[11] *Collected Papers* volume 2, paragraph 170 (Peirce 1965), and EP 2:336-37; cf. Trout 2010, 63-68.

[12] For more detail, see the essays comprising this series: “The Architecture of Theories” (1891, EP 1:285-97), “The Doctrine of Necessity Examined” (1892, EP 1:298-311), “The Law of Mind” (1892, EP 1:312-33), “Man’s Glassy Essence” (1892, EP 1:334-51), “Evolutionary Love” (1893, EP 1:352-71).

[13] *EL* 55 [57], 108 [114], 158 [161], 215 [210], 291 [277], 355 [336]

[14] With his explicit limitation of life to *human* life in this critical ethical context, I think that Dussel leaves himself open to the charge of species-ism.

[15] Dussel notes in this context that, “I will not...distinguish in this text between mere survival or material physical reproduction (eating, drinking, being in good health), and cultural, scientific, aesthetic, mystical, and ethical development” (*EL* Thesis 11, 438 [404]).

[16] Page 15 of the original Spanish edition (*EL*, Dussel 1998).

[17] Page 15 of the original Spanish edition (*EL*, Dussel 1998).

[18] cf. Dussel 2013, 8.

[19] When he wrote this 2000 review of Dussel’s *Ethics of Liberation*, Marsh had published *Critique, Action, and Liberation* (1994), *Post-Cartesian Meditations* (1988), and *Process, Praxis, and Transcendence* (1999).

[20] Potential health and developmental problems related to malnutrition are myriad. I thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting that I add malnutrition concerns to my point here.

[21] Dussel’s work in Chapter One, section 1.1 utilizes neuroscientific work of Humberto Maturana, Gerald Edelman, and Antonio Damasio, my focus being his use of Damasio’s work in *Descartes’ Error* (1994). [Dussel draws on Maturana’s *El árbol del conocimiento* (1985). And he draws on Edelman’s *Topobiology* (1988), *The Remembered Present* (1989), and *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire* (1992).]

[22] The official English translation of the heading for section 1.1 reads, “The Human Cerebral Cognitive and Affective-Appetitive System” (*EL* 57 [59], my emphasis). The rendering of the Spanish “Afectivo-Evaluativo” as “Affective-Appetitive”, however, obscures Dussel’s key term and the thematic of the section as a whole.

[23] Dussel seems to use interchangeably the terms “*afectivo-evaluativo*/ affective-evaluative” and “*evaluativo-afectivo*/evaluative-affective”. In the original Spanish, for example, “*afectivo-evaluativo*” is used in the heading for section 1.1, and then “*evaluativo afectivo*” is used in the same section, in diagram (*esquema*) 1.2 (*EL*, Dussel 1998, 93 [59]; 98 [*Esquema* 1.2]).

[24] Page 148n62 of the original Spanish edition (*EL*, Dussel 1998).

[25] Damasio dedicates chapter six of *Descartes’ Error* – “Biological Regulation and Survival” to these details of behind the scenes survival maintenance (1994, 114-26).

[26] I recommend the entire the chapter entitled, “Of Appetites and Emotions” (Damasio 2003, 26-80). For Damasio’s focused discussion of emotion in *Descartes’ Error*, see the chapter entitled, “Emotions and Feelings” (1994, 127-64). Damasio’s 2003 work, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Human Brain*, reflects growth/change in his ideas on emotions from his 1994 account. These changes do not disturb the points I highlight here. It would, however, be a fruitful project to more fully study Dussel’s work on ethical corporeality, in conversation with Damasio’s later work,

such as *The Feeling of What Happens* (1999), *Looking for Spinoza* (2003), and *Self Comes to Mind* (2010).

[27] The potentially lethal peanut allergy that results in the affective evaluation of a peanut-butter sandwich as lethal to one human, may not hold for other humans. This is key to the distinction Dussel makes between his material and formal principles. There clearly can be considerable overlap among humans about survival valuation – in terms of potable water, the need for edible food, breathable air, etc. Determining these intersubjectively *valid* aspects of object valuation involves the material principle working in conjunction with the formal principle. See *EL* 57 [58-9], 64 [67], and Chapter 2, “Formal Morality: Intersubjective Validity.”

[28] Damasio 2003, 27, 301 n. 3; cf. Trout 2010, 45-52.

[29] For Damasio, *mind* requires as a necessary condition a brain with the sophistication to produce *images/maps/representation* of stimuli, so that the human can respond to said stimuli even when they are not concretely present (1994, 90, 93).

[30] Readers interested in more specific critiques of Peirce along these lines can see Campos, 2007 and 2014.

[31] I thank Alex Santana for helping me appreciate this point. Readers interested in exploring ethics within Peirce’s thought can consult Campos 2014 and 2015, as well as Boero 2014 and Herdy 2014.